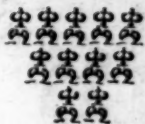


A 2
VISIBLE WAY
TO
BELIEF,
Clearly Prov'd.



The Second Edition.

L O N D O N :

Printed for A. Baldwin, at the Oxford-Arms
in Warwick-lane, 1699.

1227.570.34
Harvard College Library
Coolidge Fund
November 23, 1940


do
pe
in
m.
ge
su

THE
THEIST,
TO THE
READER.

Whoever shall peruse the Ensuing Treatise, will, I doubt not, to his Satisfaction, perceive that there is deliver'd in a more Excellent and refin'd manner such Tenents as are genuinely appropriated to the sublime Devotion of the Soul

The Theist,

*by the definition of Theisme ;
and this perform'd in divers un-
deniable Instances and Proofs,
that have not been the Subject
of any precedent Pen. For
tho it be granted that divers
have Written on the Subject
of Theisme, yet the Method
they have us'd in Publishing
the Substance, in their Opini-
ons, of that Perswasion, has
been rather in the Nature of a
Common-place, in every of their
Writings, then duely Exhibi-
ting the manifest perspicuity of
that Doctrine as it is evident
to the best Eye of Humane
Understanding.*



to the Reader.

And thus they would seem to apprehend that the Theist does rather superfcially Ruminatē on the Notion and Being of a God, (tho wisely convey'd to the Intellect by the sublime Conduct of Providence together with the many wonderful Existencies and Beings of things apparently discern'd in the Compass of the Universe,) then pertinently adore the Deity in all those considerations: As if miraculous Objects did not necessitate the Reverence and Devotion of the Humane Soul, unless there be an Inadvertency and Negligence by not Em-

A 3

phatically

The Thief,

phatically regarding the Conviction display'd by the Almighty to every reasonable Comprehension.

He must be endu'd with a very Insipid Sense that beholds a miraculous Structure without acknowledging an extraordinary Operator : And much more of a dimme discernment, if by the Fabrick of the Universe he did not conclude its Contexture devinely Admirable : All which is so generally granted, that it has the validity of a proverbial Truth, on all sides, rather than the least Admittance of Dispute or Quere :
But

—

to the Reader.

But with this difference, that whereas others deduce, on the same account, their beliefs from words, which they consider as Dictates from above, the Theist derives his from the Works of the Omnipotent; so that there cannot be any Essential misunderstanding, in that Particular, betwixt him, and any of his Opposers.

If some Professions of Faith undertake to define the Essence of the Deity more positively than is Consistent with his Creed: (As they endeavour by Sophisticate Terms or Words of Art to exert the Infinite Pro-

The Theist,

prieties and Being of the Omnipotent, which cannot be applicable to the Humane Understanding as it is conversant with Objects of Sense, or things of a Corporeal Nature.)

Notwithstanding the Theist does not deny, but in the Soul of Man there may be, in some respects, a very sublime Idea of an unlimited Capacity or extent, as from the most spiritual part of Thought it has a momentary Progression: And this is experimentally certain whenever the Imagination shall by an Instant Thought conceive a Geometrical Line extended

—.

to the Reader.

extended farther then all quantitative Limitation in any kind; Much like that of Euclid, where he defines an Infinite line Incommensurably reaching beyond all figurative Height, or Length; of which more at large in that part of this Treatise that relates to the Orbs above.

Wherefore, if the Doctors of the Schools mean no other, by the Definition of the Deity, however worded by them, then the most supereminent Attributes of an Infinite Being, in all Capacities, there is no occasion for controverting that Point betwixt the Theist and them.

The Theist,

them. Nor ought they to forget, where it is Written, that God deliver'd himself to Moses by no other Epithite then I am, what I am; which does not only pose, but check Mortality that would undertake to explicate the Divine Essence, beyond what is possible, to be comprehended by Mankind: Which the precedent expression of I am, what I am, so stupendously transcending the utmost reach of Humane Sense, does undeniably assure us. But of this sublime Notion, more fully in the subsequent Treatise,

Next

to the Reader.

Next to the Being of a Deity, there ought to be a reverend acknowledgement of the miraculous Import and Munificence in the Conduct of Divine Providence, which in the Judgment of the Theist, is conspicuously discernable in the Whole, and every Part of the Universe; and so very apparent, that it does by its constant Visibilty avert the considerate Man from having his Understanding diversly perplex'd, or envelop'd by the obscurity of Traditional or Related Miracles, of which he can have no sensible prospect:

As

The Theist,

As may be compendiously perceiv'd by perusing this Book; where not only the actual Wonders of Providence are treated more applicably Intelligible, then has as yet been observ'd in the Writtings of others. But also some things of high concern, or ~~new~~ before discover'd, no less manifestly prov'd by Mathematical certainty: Yet so perform'd, that it is made sensibly demonstrative to any Reader who is not experienc'd in that Science. Some there are that Ignorantly enough undertake to accuse Theisme, as if it oppos'd all Reveall'd Worship:

to the Reader.

Worship: Notwithstanding that the External Convictions of Providence are inseparable from his Belief; but this Reflection, as the Theist apprehends, does proceed from such who contend more for the Credit of the Intricacy of their Doctrines, or Metaphysical Distinctions, than the open Motives of Faith, that ought to Illuminate their Conceptions: From whence it is very Remarkable, that Men Bigotted by Imaginary Notions, or accusom'd to a careless and sloathful Regard of the manifest Convictions expos'd by the Almighty in the Wonders of his Works, do live, as if they discern'd not, or were surfeited with the continual Blessings that Providence, the great Lieutenant of the Deity, bestows, as Comforts to their Souls and Bodies, by Day and Night upon them.

Others

The Theist,

Others there are, tho agreeing with the Theist in their Acknowledging and Worshipping of a sole Deity: Yet are severely Imbitter'd against him, because he does not tack to his Belief such a Catalogue of Articles of Faith, as each of them profess annex'd to their Creed.

*In Answer to which, the Theist desires them to Consider, that they are so far from accomodating, betwixt themselves their different Manner of Worships, together with diverse essential Particulars by which they depart farther from one another then they can pretend to do from the Doctrine of Theisme: As is clearly preceptible in the Jew, Meho-metan, and other perverse Beliefs: Yet all of them Concenter with the Theist in the Adoration of one sole God: Which enough does manifest that the Belief of one God is the
most*

to the Reader.

most demonstrative Article of their several Perswasions: As also that their Dissentments, Enmities, and violent Oppositions, in Reference to the uncertainties of other of their Tenents, even to the Subverting of Civil Repose, and Government, may be Recorded amongst the highest Calamities of Mankind.

But on these sad Accounts, so notoriously known, the Theist is more modest then to Insert his Recriminations.

*And thus in Brief, are here presented, by way of Preface, such Sentiments of the Theist as preparatively Conduce to the facilitating of the Readers Apprehension of the ensuing Work: Which is chiefly design'd against the absur'd Impieties of Atheisme, with a due Reflection on such that disregard, in Soul, the Miracles of the Almighty as
so*

The Thief, &c.

So many Innumerable Blessings
throughout the Universe convey'd,
for the benefit of Mankind.

To Conclude, the Reader is
desir'd to take Notice, that there
is nothing Intended, in this *Trea-
rise*, whereby to Lessen in any
kind, the Excellencies of *Christi-
an Religion*, but rather an Ac-
knowledgment of its Divine Per-
fections, as may be evidently
perceiv'd in the Close of the en-
suing Book.

A
DISCOVERY
Of the most Refin'd
NOTIONS and PRINCIPLES
Of the
THEIST.

As they Essentially Relate to that
PERSWASION.

A **T**H E Religion of the
Theist, as the Word
may be deriv'd from
Greek, Consists in
the sole belief of one God, with
all other Attributes of miracu-
lous Being, Providence, and Con-
duct;

duct, that can be assign'd to Omnipotency. In which general Article of Divine Belief, the *Theist* fully concentrates with the most Universal Religions of the World: But in the motives to Divine Worship, he considerably differs from many of them, which may be thus explain'd: The *Theist* derives his Adoration of a Deity, from the Being and miraculous Order of the Universe in the Existency of the World above, and below, with whatsoever is contain'd therein, which summ'd compleats the Proposition of God demonstrated by the wonders of his Works, which he believes ought undeniably to oblige the Holy reverence of the Soul as the most visible convictions of his Creed: Or no other then so many Divine Proposals

posals in the miraculous operations and consistency of the World sensibly apprehended by the admirable conduct of the Almighty. If he beholds the miraculous Revolution above, together with the rising and setting of the Sun to day, he thinks it no less stupendious if he perceives his Glorious Ascent to morrow: And thus he fits his belief to the Volume of Divine Faith comprehended in the Worlds universal Continuance and Being, as so many Evidences of the Deity convey'd by Incomprehensible Causes and Effects. In which submission of the Soul, he cannot but separate his Holy contemplation and reverence from other Credentials of Worship that are written, or dispers'd by the Hand of Man, as he that has an

open assurance, need not uncloſe a Book to ſearch for more ; be-
 cauſe a writing however credi-
 bly aſſerting the Truth of Mira-
 cles paſt, which celebrate parti-
 cular Worſhips, cannot as he
 Judgeth, be ſo preſent with his
 Underſtanding, or his Immedi-
 ate Conviction, as what is per-
 petual to his Apprehenſion, in
 the miraculous Conſtitution, Pre-
 ſervation, and Providential ma-
 nagement of the Univerſal
 World, with the innumerable Ob-
 jects of Admiration contain'd in
 it, that does, as it were, diſcloſe
 to the Eye the boſome of Omni-
 potence ; in which the devout
 preception of Man may diſcern
 dateleſs Miracles no leſs Antient
 in Being then the total World ;
 becauſe always evident in it.
 Whereas contrarily, in the Judg-
 ment

ment of the *Theist*, other Religious Perswasions want not only the like continual manifest Convictions; but according to the known Date of their Records, must acknowledge that there was, for ought they can demonstratively alledge to the contrary, innumerable Years that preceded the Revelations they assert: From whence may be concluded that there was unaccountable Revolutions of Time when they neither had Being or Belief. And therefore no Objection, against the *Theist*, if he rejects Tenents that include a Modern Date; or not so Infinitely uncomputable by Time, as his own: It being impossible to evidence any Conviction of the Soul more Antient than the World, and the Miracles it contains.

gains. Not but the Divine Power could have ordain'd, if suitable to his Decree, one or more subsequent Worlds as amply wonderful as this we behold; there being no limitation to the Omnipotent, if pleas'd to bestow any miraculous Method in order to our Sense and Conviction: But then this must have been perpetually evident from the time it had Beginning, as clearly as is discernable any other Object of Divine Admiration and Reverence within the compass of the Universe. On which considerations, the *Theist* conceives himself obliged to dissent from divers miraculous Tenents deliver'd by the Pens of men, because not genuinely discernable in the vast Volume of the World, without any intermission

mission of Wonders, and Providence consonant to their Divine conveyance. It being a Sole-scisme, in his opinion, that men should recede from the day light of Faith, to search for Invisible Conviction. And consequently Inferrs, that since there are no apparent Miracles, but what are contain'd in the Universe of Heaven and Earth, he ought to prove from thence the devotion of his Faith. On which account he amply receives the assurance of Divine demonstration by the Eye of his Intellect : Leaving other Creeds to argue, from transcriptions of spiritual Revelations, their Systems of belief ; or from whence they severally Infer, as they rationally gather, that the Holy Precepts, of one or other, are to be embrac'd by them.

them. Whereas, the greatest part of religious Perswasion are rather the Effects of Custome and Education, then visible Conviction of any faculty of the Humane Soul.

Insomuch, that the *Theist* affirms, that a Man born blind, may be as Intelligibly perswaded of the Doctrine of *Theisme*, together with the devotion annexed to it, as if he had a plenary sight and prospect of all the Wonders within the Compass of the Universe. It not being to be doubted that such a person, tho without Eyes to discern, might by his Reason, or Sense of Feeling, not only conclude that he lives, but that he is also sustain'd by a providential Goodness and Power, as certainly as he feels within, or without

out him ; the Effects of Heat or Cold, as also nourish'd by Food, neither of which could be produc'd or caus'd by himself ; And therefore must concede that he Subsists by the dispensation of an Existence more excellent than his own ; and consequently oblig'd to give thanks devoutly on his knees for the Blessings he receives, tho without Eyes to behold the particulars of Heaven and Earth, from whence they proceed.

On the contrary, should this unseeing Man be requir'd to adhere to any religious Proposal, that presented no other texture to his Sense, then a story told of supernatural Deeds and Revelation, which concenter'd with no Rational Proprietic of his Being and Nature : He would doubtless

doubtless Annex his belief to the Doctrine of *Theisme*, with whatsoever, by undeniable consequence from it, might compleat his Devotion. These discussions, as being but previously Inserted in order to farther expand the Fonds on which the *Theist* erects his Tenents; It will be necessary to consider these three Particulars.

The

The First, As to the Being of the Universe.

The Second, Tending to the Cause and Manner of its Production, as also its wonderful Conduct, Order, and Preservation, with some Opinions of the Learned therein.

The Third, Including the Religion of the Theist, and the manner of Holy Adoration redounding from thence.

As to the First Particular.

THE *Theist* does not concern his Imagination with the trite contests that both amuse and

and weary Mens understandings, by their Impossible determinations, as they are Debated in Schools ; where some undertake to determine that, by the Efficacy of the Divine Will, the World had an original Creation from nothing : Or as others Assert, from matter that had a precedent Existency, and afterwards dispos'd by Omnipotency into the Figure we now behold. Neither of which opinions the *Theist* allows to be his : It being more perspicuous, in his Judgment, to believe that the Universe, with all it contains, is admirable, then to define by what Method, or Means its wonderful Structure was produc'd. But however it came to pass, 'twas certainly accomplish'd, without pains, by whatsoever was the manner of the

the operation, because in every thing it comprehends there is an easiness of Order and Being; otherwise there could be no one Individual, of any kind, but might be destructive to another, and the Cause perish with the Effect, which would tend to a period of Providence.

For tho it be apparent that Bodies of Life, whether Animals, or Vegetables, are subject to alteration and Death as any of them corrupt in order to the Generation of others, yet nothing is absolutely destroy'd, but rather varied as a continual supplement to more productions; so that the Cause remains entire, however it effects Alteration.

Examples are obvious, in many Particulars, of which, these are ocularly Illustrious; the Sun,
Moon

Moon and Stars, are influential Causes of innumerable Alterations of Bodies beneath 'em, yet have no change in themselves, as they Operate on other things. And thus it is very manifest that the vast Bulk of the Universe subsists by open providential Causes, and their Effects, which by a Series of humane Thought, ascend untill the Imagination, to wonder leaves 'em, as being not within its Capacity to proceed higher : And therefore, according to the poetical Allusion of *Homer's* Chain of Divine Providence, stupendiously Comits the Scales of its Causes, as fixt at the foot of *Jupiters* Chair.

If the total complexe of the Universe, does admirably convict us that it has an unconceivable Structure and Being, the
 Author

Author of its Existency must impose on the Soul a more sublime Admiration, which by the *Theist* is readily devoted to Divine Omnipotency.

There is no ordinary Understanding that may not Signally preceive the providential Results in Causes and Effects, of a deified Power ; but not with the same possibility discern the Station or Essence of the wonderful Author.

Notwithstanding, it is obviously apparent, that there are diversities of Elementary Operations and Subsistencies appertaining to the Earth, on which we tread, that, as to the Causes from whence they proceed, are as far remote from our Conceptions as any Influenc'd from the supreamest Orb of Heaven :
Which

Which experience fully assures, it being not more obscure to our Intellects, why some parts of Earth should enclose divers Materials, Mines of Diamonds, Gold, Silver, Minerals, Streams, and watry Depths, when in others are found Quarries of Stone, and Impenetrable Rocks.

Nor less clouded will be our Imagination, should we search on Mountains tops, and then discover the Head of a Spring, that by secret descending supplies perpetually the Current of a mighty River: Would not a Man think that it were as Impossible to find the Cause of this wondrous Scource, as by Reason to conceive why the Bosome of the Earth should nourish the different Materials already mention'd. Yet duely consider'd,
the

the Uses for which they are ordain'd. the course Stone or Peeble differs not in Value from the purest Diamond, as being more frequent for usage, tho not, in opinion, of the same price: So variously has Providence provided for our Ornaments and conveniencies of Life. Could the Universe be compar'd with any Conception of the Humane Mind; it were possible to Imagine a World as prodigiously wonderful, in Whole and in Parts, as this we visibly behold; but that were to extend thought beyond what is actually Miraculous, and therefore no less Absurd than Impossible; because we could think of nothing but would have some material Resemblance, to what was observ'd before, within the Compass of

C

the

the World we Inhabit: On which Ground it may be concluded that there can be no Miracle to Sense, either great or small, other then what is locally Encompass'd by the Circumference of Heaven and Earth.

Should a Man endeavour, by any Extasie of Thought, to contemplate the Being of Deity, his Imagination could extend no farther then the usual Course of providential Operations: And should he attempt to explain the Divine Essence, he could not separate his thought from Apprehending the Corporeal Shape and Likeness of some Object he had before observ'd. Wherefore, 'tis a presumption in words, if deliver'd by them, that God can be otherwise understood then by his admir'd Providence and Works.

Non

Nor is it possible to Attribute other Definition to Omnipotency ; for tho God may be understood to have the utmost Perfection of spiritual Existency, and what is more, demonstratively such by operations of a spiritual Nature, or equivalent to it, as shall be evidently prov'd in the next Particular of this Treatise : Notwithstanding, it seems Impossible to word the Definition of a Spirit, because nothing can be deliver'd by Speech but must be the Object of one, or more, of the Senses, and no Man will averr that he can either see or feel a Spirit : It being unconceivable that a Corporeal Eye or Sense whatsoever, should perceive any thing that has not bodily parts ; otherwise then it may be exerted in some

equivalent Capacity, as already express'd.

But before the first Grand Particular, of this Treatise, receives a period: The *Theist* would be understood that where he mentions the miraculous Structure and Continuance of the total Universe, he does not Annex a more Ineffable Wonder to the Whole then he does to every individual Part, whether of Animal or Vegetable Subsistency. A Miracle is as absolute in Epitomy as in the utmost extent of Breadth, Depth, and Height: In-somuch, that every particular thing appertaining to Earth, above and below its Surface, are no less stupendious then the vastness of its Circumference and Bulk.

If

If ask'd why the Earth is adorn'd with Flowers of a various Colour and Beauty, and but the Grass and Leaves of Trees greenly flourishing: The most intelligent Man can give no perfect reason, no more then if requir'd to prove why any one Stone appears of a comlier Figure and Complexion than another. If farther demanded how Rivers and Seas are supply'd with numberless Streams that are maintain'd and encreas'd: He must profess his Ignorance, because unknown to him, both the manner of the Operation and Materials by which they were originally produc'd. If interrogated why Air is thinner then Earth or Water, or why Stars are brighter then Trees, or not observ'd to augment by growth

like them, he must for the same Reason, answer as ignorantly as he did to any of the precedent Questions.

To conclude, had it pleas'd Omnipotency to have bestow'd rational Understanding to every Species of Being, and Life in the Regions of Air and Earth together, with whatsoever has a liquid Existence in the Streams and Oceans of the Universe: The Fish, Beast, and Plant, would no less admire the diversities of their Nature's Proprieties, and Shapes, then those of Man and Woman, or how all of them Subsist and Encrease in their several kinds. Neither could Mankind less stupendiously wonder how any of those were produc'd, then by what means the first Man and Woman had a primitive Life:

In

In which consideration, the humane Intellect is no less pos'd by the Miracle of its own Composure and Being, then it is by contemplating how the vast Structure of the World, with its summ of Wonders, was compleated as 'tis now beheld.

Which perfectly demonstrates that there is neither *magis*, or *minus*, in the miraculous Act whereby was produc'd the total Universe, or any Individial thing that is contain'd by its Incommensurable Compass.

From whence the *Theist* concludes that Omnipotency may be Emphatically defin'd by the Miracles of its Works, since by no other Definition, or Syllogisme, which the Schools provide, it can be so visibly apprehended.

And it were vain to Imagine that the Divine Power, too Infinite to be comprehended by any System of words, should be by that Method, no less convictive, to the Eye of Thought, then it is by ocular demonstration of Things manifestly Admirable : Wherefore Mankind ought to acknowledge, with the highest Reverence of the Soul, that the Essence of Omnipotency, Imcomprehensible by accents of Speech, may be equivalently explain'd in the superlative Wonders of the World, and the Works it contains. Which in summ, is the Doctrine of the *Theist*, as it relates to a Divine Power and Being,

But as to the Sphere or Residence of the Almighty ; which by the Tenents of some is Imagin'd

gin'd to be above the Supreamest of the Celestial Orbs, the *Theist* does not undertake to define; which were no less absurd then to attribute to an Infinite; a circumscrib'd Being.

The Geometrician certainly proves, that nothing can be said to have place; other then what is contain'd by proportional Lines within the Compass of some Figure: Whereby he demonstrates, that whatsoever is alledg'd to proportion, must consequently be allow'd Parts, as in the Dimention of Alineal superficies, in any kind, or solids, as the Cube, Globe, Cone, Parabola, or the like: The most excellent of which cannot comprehend the Figure of Deity, which if without Body, there is no possibility of its resemblance to
any

any Corporeal Thing or Measure: Wherefore the denomination of Heaven, tho Immensely suppos'd beyond the highest of Stars that shine to wonder above us, is too narrow a Station for the Presence-Chamber of the Deity: Because the nominating of Place does imply the circumscription of material Parts; and no Man can be so Ignorant as to suppose that there is any such thing as a bodily Infinite, or that any local quantity may be Incomensurably acknowledg'd.

Notwithstanding it must be granted that the opinion of Holy Persons, tho not strictly to be prov'd, in appropriating to the sublimest height the mansion of Omnipotency, is allowable, because devout contemplation the farther it ascends upward has a
more

more remote, or ineffable Excellency, as being exalted above Things of more familiar observance, tho not less Admirable; as has been precedently observ'd, then consists in the speculation of any heigher objects of thought that impresseth on the Understanding, Reverential acknowledgment of a Supream Power that by its munificence supports the Fabrick of the Universe, and all it contains: Wherefore, in Reverence to discernless or unknown Being, a place unknown, as the most suitable Epithite, may be term'd the select Seat of the Almighty. The Nature of Men having more dread, however, unperceptible of what they conceive they ought stupendiously to believe then if it were present to their Understandings: Infomuch

Infomuch that could the humane Eye surpass its usual prospect of the Sun and Stars, and next make a visible discovery of a Heaven far more Glorious then any of the shining Sphere already discern'd, the wonderful Objects might, in short time, be as regardlessly perceiv'd as any of the sublime Illuminations observ'd before.

So heedless is Man of things that require his perfect Admiration.

But as to the denomination of Heaven, as a sublime some where, rather then place of the Bless'd, as the Schools define, with the beautiful Vision of the Almighty, as also the perpetual Felicity of pious Immortality : 'Tis a passible Opinion in the Judgment of the *Theist*, and may not be Incongruously

gruouſly deriv'd from experimental Obſervation ; as by the Eye the Imagination aſcends by comparing the different Magnitudes, Heights, and Splendors of the Moon, Sun, Planets, and Stars ; by which gradual Contemplation, or as it were ſtep, by ſtep, is apprehended a more Divine and ſublime Being of the Deity.

The great Philoſopher *Ariſto-
tle*, was not diſſentaneous to this Notion, when he defin'd the Ce-
leſtial appearances, ſo term'd here inſtead of Bodies, for Rea-
ſons that will ſoon follow, by the Name of a fifth Eſſence, as an extraordinary refin'dneſs In-
cident to their Being and Na-
tures, Invariable in their Gran-
dure and Figures without the leaſt ſignification or tendency
to

to Elementary Composition or Change, as so many particular Emblems of Eternity, by whose admir'd Illuminations the humane Soul might be guided to the transcendent acknowledgment of a more Illustrious and Divine Existence.

But enough has been said relating to the first Branch of this Treatise, and the Being of a God.

I
D
wi
as
the
Ser
of
of
pro

The Second Particular, tending to the Cause and Manner of the Worlds production: As also its wonderful Conduct, Order, and Preservation; with some Opinions of the Learned therein.

IT has been evidently explain'd, by the precedent Discussions, that the Universe, withall its furrounds, is display'd as ocularly miraculous: And therefore incumbent on humane Sense to be a diligent Admirer of all its Objects. The neglect of which cannot be enough Reprov'd, since it proceeds from sloathful

sloathful Imprudence, or Inad-
 vertency of Men, in being not
 more properly diligent in devo-
 ting the Duty of their admirati-
 ons as fully as the Wonders of
 Providence are obvious to their
 sight. Insomuch, that a tale
 told of any extraordinary Fact,
 if but suppos'd miraculous, shall
 more assure their Imaginations,
 then what may be Admirably
 beheld in the open Face of the
 Universe, every minute of Life.
 Or that familiar Convictions,
 because familiar, should be less
 regarded then stupendious Rela-
 tions without ocular or sensible
 Assurance: Whereas the wonder-
 ful continuance of Objects, and
 such are those which are perspi-
 cuously numerous, and within
 the Compass of the World,
 ought to induce our most con-
 stant,

stant, and solemn Admiration
as so many testimonials of an
Omnipotent Author. Not that
the *Theist* would occasion, by
Assertions of this Nature, such
perplexities in the Soul as are ob-
serv'd in Men that would under-
take to discover Causes and Ef-
fects far obscur'd by the Vail of
Providence; or by what me-
thods of Omnipotency the Uni-
verse had Original Beginning.
The most general belief of Men,
however differing in other Te-
nents, either as they are *Jews*,
Christians, or *Mahomitans*, Is, that
the total World together with
all it circumscribs above and be-
low, was by the Will and Di-
ctate of the Almighty created
from nothing: And that Incor-
poreal Substances, defined by the
Schools: Angels and Spirits had

a concomitant production with-
in the compass of six Days, as
the Scripture affirms, with Ele-
mentary Bodies of innumerable
Kinds according to the diversities
of their Scituations, Shapes,
and manner of Subsistence.

But here it must be under-
stood, that it cannot be proper-
ly Imagin'd how an Infinite Be-
ing and Operator should be said
to effect, in any degrees of
Time, whatsoever was produc'd
by Omnipotent Power; because
every Act that may be compu-
ted or number'd in Time, how-
soever swift its Acceleration pre-
supposeth Motion and Comensu-
rable Parts, which were too hea-
vily attributed to the Method
and Deeds of the Almighty.
Wherefore the expressions may
rather pass for a manner of speak-
ing

ing whereby Holy Writ would more familiarly captivate humane Understanding, which cannot apprehend or think of any Object or Existency, in any consideration, that is not, more or less, within the Verge of Time as it is judg'd by the Understanding. So that where the Text enumerat's Days in which the Universe was compleated; 'tis not meant as if God had set a task upon himself, to be finish'd in any Journals of time, because the Effect of his Eternal Determination could have no temporary Epithite; and therefore the words of the Writer whereby to deliver, for the benefit of humane Capacity, the Infinite Decree and Operations of the Omnipotent, as temporarily produc'd; must be so intended, be-

cause impossible to be apprehended in any other dialect, and Man the Reader.

Another Opinion the *Theist* observes, and much affected by modern Authors ; which is, that there was a material World in Being before it had the Date of Creation from the Pen of *Moses* : Affirming, according to the noted Maxim, that of nothing, nothing could be made ; and this original Matter, tho by them suppos'd Corporeal, had no perfect composition till dispos'd by Providence into such bodily Proportions and Forms as are manifest in the supreamer and lower Regions of the Universe. In this Chaos of Matter, in consequence to their System of the Worlds Production, must undeniably be granted a capacitative
Being

Being of Incorporeal Substances,
 as well as those that appertain'd,
 as they Affirm, to the bulk of
 Matter, and by the same process
 receiv'd a future perfection: By
 which Conception of theirs they
 seem, absurdly to complicate
 Eternity of Matter, and Substan-
 ces of all Kinds, whether Corpo-
 real of Spiritual; untill all of
 them were subsequently com-
 pleted by Divine Ordination:
 but this Imagination tends not
 only to Assert a double Eternity,
 by allowing a perpetual Existen-
 cy to Matter, as well as to the
 Being of an Omnipotent Power,
 but also by affirming that all
 things were previously dispos'd,
 from something, either Corpore-
 al or Spiritual, that was Incedent
 to their precedent Capacities;
 by which they annex a tempora-

ry Operation to the Works of the Almighty. So that, in effect, they allow, instead of Creation, no other then a providential Alteration and Refinement of bodily Parts, no less then Substances, that were to be exalted to spiritual Perfection. From which modalities, or manner of precedent and future Subsistences, they derive their Tenents relating to the Being of Angels, Spirits, of all degrees, with every thing that has Being in the Visible and Invisible parts of the World.

And as their most Emphatical Argument, in reverence to humane Original, they plead the Text of Scripture, where it is said, *That God form'd Man out of Clay,* as precedent Matter.

But this excludes not the Creation of that Clay so wonderful-

ly Impress'd by the Almighty as to compleat the Figure of Humanity ; unless they annex perpetuity to Matter, which were to double Eternity, by assigning that Infinite Attribute no less to Matter than God : An absurdity condemn'd by the Doctrine of the *Theist*, as already Instanc'd ; who rather beholds the Universe as the Object of his Admiration, then undertakes to assert by any Method, that he can contemplate, the Manner of its wonderful Existence ; as not possible, in his Judgment, to conceive how any thing had precedent Being that is not manifest in a present Cause. Infomuch that he doubts not to affirm that had Man been capable of apprehending how the World, with all the particulars it contains, was produc'd,

there had not been wanted the Inscriptions of Providence, on whatsoever has Being, within its Circumference, whereby Mankind might have legibly discern'd how its total and Parts had the compleat Structures, and Subsistences that are visible to the Eye.

But since the whole with its wonderful Particulars are within the Complex of a mighty Round more amazingly vast then can be Intelligently penetrated by humane Sense, or the height of its Diameter measur'd by any Scale of Thoughts that can Ascend to the utmost Point of its supream Cause: By the munificence of the Omnipotent we are in some sort familiarly acquainted with miraculous Objects tho not with their miraculous Author:

thor : And notwithstanding that
 spiritual Essences together with
 their admir'd Proprieties, are not
 so readily defin'd, or the manner
 of their Existence and Operati-
 ons, as Corporeal Beings, how-
 ever wonderful, that actually
 Imploy the Sense as they sym-
 pathize in bodily Temperaments,
 Parts, or Proportions, with those
 of Mankind : Yet even of these
 we may have such real apprehen-
 sions as admirably Approximate
 the, otherwise, remote specula-
 tion or their Order, Conduct,
 and Nature. Let the Example
 be taken from the Sun, and Stars,
 which the *Theist* rather deno-
 minates spiritual Appearances,
 or equivalently such, then any
 other definition, given of them,
 by the greatest Philosopher ; and
 he may be well allowed that li-
 berty

berty if he proves them equivalent in their refin'd Illuminations, Beings, and Motions, to such stupendious Excellencies that can be no otherwise comprehended then as they are effecatioufly spiritual.

The Grand Philosopher *Aristotle*, (as before quoted,) by the acuteness of his Intellect, gives the Definition of quintessential Perfection to the Celestial Luminaries, which signifies a Fifth different Essence from any thing that had any Ingredients of the Four Elements. But had he as accurately consider'd their wonderful Motions and Celerity, as they consummate their Revolutions, he might have allow'd them the Epithites of spiritual Equivalents, in every respect.

The

The best Account that the most celebrated Astronomers can give of the Suns diurnal Progress, is that he exceeds fifteen Millions of *English* Miles in the four and twenty Hours; and consequently, that in one Minute of Time his expedition is somewhat more then eleven Thousand a Hundred and eleven Miles of the same Account: Which incomprehensible swiftness seems liker to vanishing then apparent Motion. It being Impossible for any thing that has bodily Composition to move with that Celirity, because whatsoever has Corporeal Parts must take up space, and therefore move by slower Degrees and Computations then in the Example given of the Suns acceleration: Nor is there any Individual Motion,

Motion, within the Circle of the Universe, below the Orbs above, that has any competent Similitude to their admirable Movements. The hasty Currents of the Ocean, or wings of the loudest Winds are slow, in their utmost Expeditions, and so are the most sudden flashes of Lightning ; if compar'd with one moments Journey of the Celestial Spheres,

And what is of higher Admiration, were it so decreed by Providence, 'tis as possible for the Sun to finish his diurnal Revolution in the same Minute of Time, that the Astronomers allot to the Miles above mention'd, as for a Thought, that is spirited by the Soul, to Imagine, in a moment, a Methematical Line extended from the East point

to the West of the Horizon.

And thus may the wondrous Acceleration of the Sun be no less prespicuously contemplated, then, in an Instant, may be perceiv'd any Ray of his arrive to the Eye.

But should any solid Body, whether little or great, be suppos'd to move, with the swiftest Imagination, from any one Point of the Compass to another; its dimensions of Length, Breadth, and Height, both in a Philosophical and Mathematical Sense, would have local removes, or transition from place to place by such parts of Time as can have no comparative Proportion to the Instance already given, of the Suns momentary Celerity, then 'tis possible to parallel the
start

start of a Thought to the measures of bodily Motion.

From whence it follows, that if the diurnal Revolution of the Sun is in every particle of Time, miraculous ; a more then ordinary definition ought to be allow'd to his Revolution and Essence. No one visible Radiation of the Sun but resembles, as the learned in Opticks deliver, a Geometrical Line: But because no such Line can be the Object of Sight, but as it seems to have Corporeal Breadth: It has therefore pleas'd Divine Providence so comfortably to illuminate the World, that every Beam transmitted by the Sun, is visible with his Figure, tho his Essence be not more understood, by any definitive Term, then the Miracle of his Light and Motion.

On

On which ground, the *Theist* conceives it very significant to attribute, instead of other denomination, the Equivalency of spiritual appearances to the Sun and Stars, as suitable to undeniable Proprieties in them, whereby is apprehended that spiritual Existencies may be seen, tho not understood; yet by their Visibilty directed, as the shining guides of Providence, to Imagine more excellent Beings in the Supream Palace of the Almighty.

Next to the Immense progressions of the Stars and planetary Orbs that compleat the Twenty-four hourly Periods of the Day: The *Theist* as fully admires the sudain diversity of their Longitudes, Latitudes, Excentricities, Oppositions Conjunctions,

junctions, direct, or Retrograde, together with their various Heights and Distances from the Centre of the Earths superficies: To demonstrate all which, would require a large Astronomical System.

Wherefore the *Theist* annexeth to the diurnal, his additional Wonder to what may be usually inferr'd from observation of the Suns Annual Motion, by which the vast Orb of Light, and the Worlds miraculous Eye, beholds its Brightness forward and backward remov'd, swifter then can be Instanc'd by Thought, yet with no contradiction to Time; tho without the Suns contradictory Motion neither the hours of the Day or Year could be number'd: If by his glorious diurnal progress he summs Mil-
lions

lions of Degrees forward, he
 moves, in the same Compass of
 Time, somewhat less then one
 Degree backward towards the
 gradual finishing of the Eclip-
 tick Year : In which, as so ma-
 ny periodical Blessings of Pro-
 vidence, the Elementary Round
 of the Universe has preservation,
 as also the Life, Growth, and
 Subsistence of its Innumerable
 Individuals. From whence the
Theist has reiterated assurance
 that the Sun and Stars, as to
 their undefinable Essence and
 Motion, may be term'd, (as
 before Inserted,) spiritual Equi-
 valents ; since no Corporeal
 Movement can possibly perform,
 in all its Parts, too contrary Mo-
 tions in the same Instant of
 Time.

E

But

But whatsoever may be said to have a spiritual Operation, cannot be circumscrib'd by place, or in the Phrase of the Schools, have the Epithite of *prius* and *posterius* in Motion; wherefore the Miracle, not otherwise to be worded, may be, in some kind compar'd to the expansion, this way, and that way, of a Thought, or as one may conceive, as precedently mention'd, a Geometrical Line extended, to any distance, forward and backward by the swiftness of Imagination. And whosoever would oppose the definition here given, as it relates to motion, tional Beings above, the *Theist* leaves him, to the Inquiry of his Brain, to find better.

In the mean while, 'tis very manifest, that by no Speculation of theirs they can give any nominal Definition, whereby they might significantly extricate the difficulties, they are under, by endeavouring to compute the wonderful Motions above otherwise then as they allow Corporeal Substances to the Sun and Stars: Which tho' miraculously appearing Effectually such, because otherwise Men and Creatures could not have the benefit of their Illuminations; Heat, and Influence: Yet, (for the Reasons already given,) the *Theist* affirms that as in their Motions, and Operations, they are virtually spiritual; or which is all one with the Denomination, (before asserted,) of spiritual Equivalents: Notwithstanding, that for

the advantage of humane perception and Commodities of Life, they seem to be corporeally discernable. And no Man can affirm that the Omnipotent disposer of the Universe, with all its appurtenances, could not, by miraculous Benevolence, confer bodily appearance on Existencies that, consider'd in themselves, were destitute of Visible Beings.

But since the Motions of the Celestial Orbs must evidently relate to their Manner of Existence and Essence, the *Theist* undertakes to demonstrate the Assertion from the most Erudite and accurate Astronomical Systems.

Let the *Copernican Hypothesis* because in this Age, of greatest Repute, be made the Example

by

by which 'tis alledg'd, as the most facile proof, that the Sun stands as the looker on, in his Sphere, whilst the Earth performs the diurnal and annual Revolution, which *Ptolomy*, and *Tycho*, with other learned Observators, Attributed to the Sun: Tho it be well known that *Copernicus* deriv'd his *Hypothesis* from Antient *Pythagoras*, who, Imagin'd the Earth to be a Planet betwixt *Mars* and *Venus*, and some of his Successors.

Notwithstanding, it must be granted that the Ingenuity of *Copernicus* added some Refinement to the Tenent of the Earths Motion: Yet rather taken up by him, as he apprehended it more aptly Coherent with Astronomical computations then really his belief: As appears by the

Dedication of his Works to an Eminent Cardinal.

The Figure describ'd by the Earth, in her diurnal and annual Revolution, was circular, according to *Copernicus*: And herein, except in his *Hypothesis*, he differ'd neither from *Ptolomy* or *Tycho*, as they determin'd to the Sun and Stars circular Motions, but *Kepler*, who liv'd after the latest of these, appropriated to the Earth an Elipsical Revolution, whence he Imply'd that the Earth is of the Shape of an Elipsis: Which if true of the Earths Figure, the same might be allow'd to be describ'd by her Motion; because no Corporeal Substance can move, but it must necessarily assimilate its outward Form and Proportion: So if a Roler be turn'd on the Ground

Ground it will Impress, if there discernable, its figurative Representation; besides abundance of Examples that might be given to the same purpose.

But as for the Incommensurable boundary of the Universe, 'tis doubtless circular because the most perfect of Figures: In which there is no point of its Beginning or End, if consider'd in its self; and therefore by its admirable Propriety more suitably circumscrib'd the World with all the Wonders comprehended in it.

How the Earth, if suppos'd to move can, in its total Complex, be properly term'd either Globolously round, as *Copernicus* Systematically allow'd, or a Conical solid, in the Form of an Elipsis, as most of the late *Copernicans*

pernicans. Imagine; Is far from being Corobarated by any sensible Demonstration: But rather, on the contrary, occularly confuted by viewing of the different Scituations in the Earth of Hills, Mountains, Valleys, Rocks, Woods, Seas, Rivers, and the like: Which cannot, apparently be circumscrib'd by any Figure that can be nam'd Geometrically Regular.

And if granted, that the Earth does move, in any method they delineate, they produce no proof that it visibly does so: Instead of which they undertake to suppose that it may have the Motion they assign to it, instead of the Sun, and not be seen to move, according to the noted Verse in *Virgil*.

Provehimur

*—Provehimur portū, terasque
urbesque Recedunt.*

Yet this is their firmest Argument whereby they would persuade opinion, that the Eye is not so certain, in beholding the rising and setting of the Orbs above, as their Doctrine.

The main Allegation by which they seem not only to warrant the Earths Motion, in all Capacities, Instead of the Sun; but also to deny diurnal Revolution, both to the fix'd Stars and Planets, as they only appropriate to the Motion of the Earth, the twenty four Hours that terminate the natural Day; is, that if diurnal Circulation be granted to the supream Sphere of Stars, they must expedite, according to Astronomical computation,

643000 German Miles in a Moment, or two Seconds of an Hour: As also that the Planet *Saturn* next to them, in the vastness of his Orb and Height, must Revolve 909 of those Miles by the same Measure and Compass of Time. All which may be granted, tho' confessedly wonderful, if allowed to the Stars, as before describ'd, Motion and Essence equivalently spiritual, that like the transition of a momentary Thought, spirited by the Soul, may surpass any distance, or measure of Miles that can be computed, as has been precedently instanc'd, and would tend to unnecessary Repetition if again mention'd.

Wherefore, should any Inspector of this Treatise shock at the Epithite of spiritual Equivalency.

lency attributed to the admirable Expedition of the Celestial Luminaries; he ought to consider that Words devis'd, where the Subject treated on is not in it self exactly Intelligible, may have the requisits of a Definition, if thereby probably open'd to the understanding, of whatsoever had been more obscure without it.

Nor can the Importancy of the Authors supposition, on this sublime Account, be farther taxable then Astronomical *Phenomenas* Antient or Modern, if with the likeness of proof, Invented by them, they compute, in order to reduce within the Compass of Imaginary Rules, what had else been too boundless for humane Science.

'Tis

'Tis not to be doubted that the *Copernicans* will be opposers of the manner of the System, deliver'd here relating to the Essence and Motions of the Stars of every Denomination, by reason that the grossly conceive that they are of a Corporeal Nature as well as the Earth, which they have Elevated into the room of a Planet betwixt the Sphere of *Mars* and *Venus*, according to the Tenents of *Pythagoras*, (as before observ'd:) For which they give no better account then that the Body of the Earth, reputed by Astronomers, at least, a Hundred and sixty six times lesser then the appearing dimensions of the Sun, may sooner Revolve a eleven Thousand one Hundred and eleven of our Miles in a Minute, then the Greater Body,

as

as they call it, of the Sun: Tho' hard to apprehend how either of them, in a Corporeal Sense, can expedite that Celerity in the same Portion of Time: For the Earth however diminutive, if compar'd with the Sun, yet as to common Understanding, and the Measure that is allow'd its Compass, it seems too big in any Figure, to Answer the Tenents of the *Copernicans* by the swiftness of its Progression in a temporary Period so very small. And as they cannot but acknowledge the Movement wonderful, whether allotted to the Sun or Earth, so it may be undeniably a-like, in either of them, if proceeding from a miraculous Cause.

Nor does it appear, if granted the Theorem of the Earths Motion,

Motion, that either *Copernicus*; or the most diligent of his *Astronomical* Successors, have by any exactness in their *Computations*, exceeded such as have been perform'd by the *Ptolomaick* or or *Tyconique* Method; the latter of which persons stands at this Day, more renown'd for his accurate Observations, than any, that can be for any other pretended, if compar'd with his.

But because Demonstration is a surer proof then can be deduc'd from the greatest Probability of Argument: Let it be granted that the Sun as well as the Earth, has bodily Parts, according to the *Copernican* Sense, and *Hypothesis*; as also that the Sun is the Center of of the Earth: Or that the Earth, as others affirm, is the Center of the Sun:

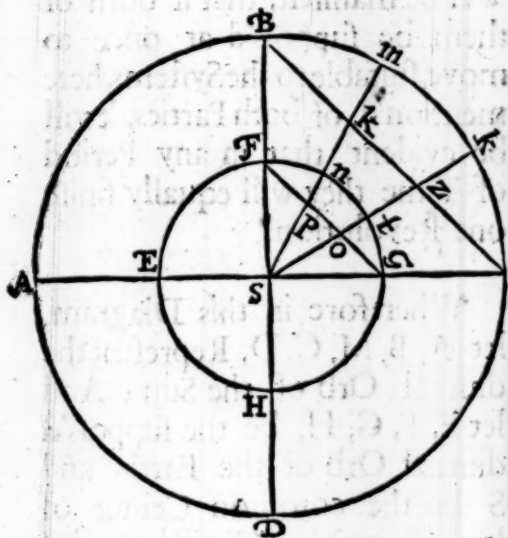
And

And let both of them in Figure,
be acknowledg'd Circular.

By the Diagram, here annex'd,
'will be manifest, that if both of
them be suppos'd at once to
move, suitable to the Systems, here
mention'd, of both Parties, 'twill
be evident that in any Period
of Time they will equally finish
one Revolution.

Wherefore in this Diagram,
let A, B, M, C, D, Represent the
diurnal Orb of the Sun; And
let E, F, G, H, be the suppos'd
diurnal Orb of the Earth, and
S be the common Center of
both their Orbs: 'Twill be found
by certain Proportion, that in
the same Compass of Time,
however vast the space that the
Earth can be Imagin'd to move
from F, to N, in the same
Time

Time the much greater Orb of,
the Sun may Revolve from B
to M.



The Demonstration in Words are thus.

In Parallel Circles, as the Semidiameter of one, is to the Semidiameter

Semidiameter of the other, so is
 sine, vers'd sine, subtense of
 one Circle, to the right sine,
 vers'd sine, subtense of the o-
 ther: According to the 11 Prop.
 of the 7 Book of *Euclid*, and
 confirm'd by the 4 of the 6, for
 as $SF : FP :: SB : BK$: the Tri-
 angles SPF and SKB are
 Equiangled, the Angle S com-
 mon to both, and right Angled
 at P and K , and therefore the
 third equal in both, as also the
 sides proportional: The same is
 demonstrable of either of the o-
 ther Triangles.

To make all which evident to
 Sense, let a small Thread be fa-
 sten'd or held in the Center S ,
 and move the other end of it
 from B to M , it shall as soon
 come to the greater space BM ,
 F as

as to the lesser FN , which was to be prov'd ; and the same may be Affirm'd of FG , in in the Triangle S, F, G , or of BC , in the greatest Triangle S, B, C . Wherefore the Sun may as soon Revolve from B , to M , as the Earth can from F , to N , if both be granted to move, at once by the same Cause: And what can be appli'd to both, if suppos'd to be mov'd together, ought to be separately allow'd the Sun as more suitable to ocular Evidence.

Wherefore the *Theist* concludes, this second Head of this Treatise, with demonstrative assurance that the *Copernicans* are no less Confuted as they would Imagine that the Earth moves, Instead of the Sun, then they, or any

any other opposers must be, if contradictory to any of his former Principles rationally asserted.

The Third Particular explicating the Faith of the Theist, and his Manner of Adoration, redounding from thence.

TIS not doubted by the *Theist*, that it has been enough prov'd in the beginning of this Treatise, that the open Causes and Effects of Divine Providence sensibly beheld in the ordain'd Constitution of the Universe, and all its Parts, as so many undeniable publicati-

ons that ought to Convict the
 Reverence of the humane Soul,
 in Reference to the Worship of
 Omnipotency ; could by no o-
 ther means then by micaculous
 Order and visible Deeds, be so
 familiarly communicated to the
 preception of Mankind ; all
 which has been precedently Ex-
 plain'd.

And whosoever denies that
 holy Belief, may not, in that
 Method, be perspicuously ex-
 erted, must have recourse to
 such Relations of Divine Wor-
 ship as cannot, in their Nature,
 exceed moral Certainties, or the
 Effects of Custome and Edu-
 cation ; which, in their utmost
 extent, have less assurance then
 is evident in the Proof of any
 one Proposition of the Ele-
 ments of *Euclide* : And 'twere
 absurd

absurd to imagine that a Man should be more able to explain the Properties of a Line, or superficies, then to Demonstrate how he comes by that main Article, of his Creed, the belief of one God.

Wherefore the *Theist*, as an Infallible Motive to the duty of his Faith, has superlative assurance conspicuously asserted in the miraculous Conduct, Facts, and Munificence of the Almighty, without the help of Man as his subordinate Tutor; otherwise then as it is Incumbent on the more assiduous discernments of some to remind others of the pious regard they ought to have to Works of the Almighty, so manifest to every Eye.

Whereas, other perswasions, together with their undiscernable motives, or suppositious Doctrins, convey'd, and impos'd by the Interested diversities of humane Allowance, make their obscure Entrance into the Soul of the believer, and by their fermented oppositions instigate polemick Disputes with such dreadful Animosities as patronise War and Destruction, whereby they may justly be deem'd, instead of Religions, the Incendiaries of violence and blood: Which sanguine Impieties, or destroying of Lives on the account of contested or uncertain Tenents, are wholly avoided by the Principles of the *Theist*, no less Impossible to be oppos'd then if Men should deny the Being of the miraculous World they Inhabit, or the Gifts

Gifts of Providence which they have Eyes to behold.

But the *Theist* is not desirous farther to enlarge or apply, what might be said on this occasion; least he should provoke Men of words, or such that with more Passion then Sense, would be his wrangling opposers.

If he Affirms that the Universe is the mediate Object of his devotion to the Omnipotent; he does not therefore conclude that the World was produc'd or Man in it, as if any glory, by either, or both, could be added to God, who is Eternally glorified in himself; and not at all by constituting, in a direct Interpretation, the species of Mankind, so wickedly temper'd and compos'd in Body and Mind;

and with that generality too, that the Rolls of the Impious are numberless, in every consideration, if compar'd with the few good: Infomuch, that some have attributed the production of Man to an accidental aberration of Nature, in the Course of her Works; or her Ambition, by that Enormity, to raise humane Individuals that should be wickedly predominant over themselves and the rest of her Creatures: Wherefore they conclude that Mankind had as corrupt a beginning as 'tis continu'd in too many notorious Examples of Life and Death: As also that they could not be Creatures allow'd by the Almighty to present him with the Address of their praise or Prayer.

To

To which the *Theist* Replies, that it cannot be denied that the vast Troops of the Wicked abundantly over-number the Good; Notwithstanding, their facinourous Deeds abolish not the rational Capacities they have to amend, or to be inform'd by the discreet Integrity of the better principled few: So that 'tis either for want of diligent Instructors, or as they are not encourag'd, as they ought to be, in applying their assiduity to impress Divine Moralities; whereby multitudes might be render'd more propitiously devout; and therefore not merely the natural Inclinations and Tempers of Men that causeth their averfness from Piety and Obedience.

And

And till Rulers of People are less blemish'd by their Principles and Actions, and more advantageous Examples of eminent Goodness to such they govern, there will be but small progress towards a general Redress: By reason that where Men can be beneficially countenanced in being bad, they will seldom Improve, by their worldly loss, to the benefit of their Souls.

In fine, should a Man, according to the last Instance, think himself beholding to his blind expression of Nature for all; or what is more, be so ungrateously thoughtless as in no manner of notion to be thankfully accountable for his Being, or the benefits of Life enjoy'd by him: 'Tis very probable that such a person, if mention'd to him, that it must

must be some beneign Cause that had given him his Intellectual faculties above other Animals, and likewise capacities of Mind to subjugate them, in divers kinds, for his use and subsistence, would acknowledge, by some Denomination or Method, that he ought to give thanks, as well as pray that the Commodities of Life might be continu'd to him here, tho he believ'd nothing of a future World: And therefore detestable Inconsiderateness in such as appear neither Profelites to Reason, or Religion.

Others there are, and of accurate perception, that want no diligence in observing the Divine Conduct and Order diffus'd throughout the Universe and all its Particulars: Who notwithstanding

standing their utmost endeavour, are at a stand, because they Judge that they cannot discern in the open face of Providence other than the universality of temporary living and dying, with their appurtenancies, as they relate to every Individual of Life: And therefore conclude that Mortality is the total end of Mankind; there being nothing, as they conceive, in any method of Providence, that gives any assurance of surviving after Death, or apparent Being of Immortality.

But Men, of this genius, whilst they imploy the inquisitive subtilities of their Brain below themselves, omit the Judgment they might receive from their Eyes in taking their prospect upwards; by which they might visibly apprehend that the Skies
are

are adorn'd with numberless Stars, that by no humane observation had ever any alteration, or periods Incident to dissolution: And therefore so many admirable Emblems of th: Immortality that has Being in them; as by the Essential proprieties of their Nature, Figure, Continuance, and Motion, is very manifest; and it has been pertinently prov'd, in the second Particular of this Treatise, that a Thought of the Mind can resemble, by suddain expedition, the swiftest Acceleration of a Star: And may not therefore the Soul of Man, from whence such Thought proceeds, be as Immortal as the brightest of the Orbs above.

And thus may be encourag'd the sublime Hope that Mankind ought

ought to have of endless Life and Perfection ; since by the Dispensation of the Almighty there is Immortality beheld in the Luminaries of Day and Night : And why the humane Soul should not be granted as capable of Everlasting subsistence is not to be disprov'd ?

Too many there are,* that by their infamous Conversation and Lives are so far from meriting a mention in the refin'd List of Immortality, as they deserve not to enjoy the common benefits of worldly Life : Whilst in Soul they possess so uncomfortable a Being, that by Reason of their Impieties, 'tis their utmost wish that Mortality may be their Period. Wherefore they Judge that 'tis no Interest to their Lives to
pray,

pray, unless their supplications might be admitted, whereby they would be exempted from Death, and continu'd as bad as they are; and so they are here left to themselves, till they think fit to be better.

And now to conclude with the Method of the *Theist's* Devotion, to which he conceives he has so many palpable motives from the bounties of the Almighty to the Life he possesseth, and whatsoever tends to his comfort in Body and Mind, that he were guilty, of a sloathful Impiety, should he not acknowledge his thankfulness with his daily Bread; and the more, because frequently bestow'd by the mercies of providence.

As to his manner of Prayer, the *Theist* affirms it inseparably
annexed

annexed to the Entireness of his Belief and Method of Devotion; which he conceives cannot have a more refin'd Evidence, than that it perfectly avoids all disputable Commixture or Impurity from any Notions of Erronius Faith, or their Parcels of Belief complicated, or intermix'd with the diffus'd Creeds of some others: Wherefore he considers his Persuasion as an infallible Purity, or refin'd Nature of Belief, absolutely concomitant with the Worship of one God, palpably Reveal'd in the stupendious Being of his Works, and the Conduct of Providence visible in them; on which account, it is impossible to add, to so many Superlative Convictions of the Soul, any particular Article of Faith, that is less manifest, than the Miracles
of

of Omnipotency perspicuously dispers'd throughout the total Fabrick of the Universe, as it comprehends the Wonders beheld above and below.

And as Divine Admiration must necessarily produce Reverence from the humane Soul ; 'tis no less undeniably consequent, that an Eternal Conviction, by actual Wonders, is a Motive above all others, whereby is Effected the Piety of Devotion confirm'd by the barefac'd Miracles of the World, and its Universal Providence : On which *Basis*, by the acknowledg-ment of the *Theist*, does consist the common Place of his Religion, as has been preecedently Instanc'd.

If other Devotions have enlarg'd their Creeds beyond open Miracles, or as they were, in Effect, so many providential Proposals of Worship Universally Evident from the time that Mankind had Being in the World, the Progression of such Beliefs could have no other Rise then as they were suppos'd to be Reveal'd to particular Persons: And were more or less valu'd, by Men that duely consider'd the original Start, or Comencement of different Persuasions, as the Authors, or first Propagaters of them, were renown'd for extraordinary Prudence, Moralities of Life, and holy Conversation. Or signally Celebrated for miraculous Deeds conceiv'd to be produc'd by them; and consequently, by Education and Customs descended,

descended, so reputed, to Posterity.

Innumerable Examples might be given, of this kind, from undoubted Stories of Ages past; but none more remarkably Antient, or of longer continuance than the gross, or horrible Impiety, that Worshipt the Almighty in the Persons of Men; or, like to an Arithmetical Fraction of $\frac{1}{2}$, divided Godship by conceiving it Infus'd into humane Body.

And thus did not a few of the Antients who attributed to heroic Persons, and famous Founders of pious Institutions and Precepts, the Titles of Demigods: Not as they believ'd them such, but as their Signal Exam-
 G 2 ples;

ples, and Sacred Ordinations, could not have sufficient Reputation without a sublime Epithite: And the more pardonable in those Authors, because no better meanes was known to them whereby Mankind might beindued to Holy Obedience and the Sacred Duty that appertain to civil Society and Government.

But as the Intention might be, in some respects, pardonable, the Consequence was highly pernicious to the Devotion and Peace of Men; as one fellow or other, in several Ages of the World, presum'd to be Inspir'd with Celestial Dictates: Or for more supreme Confirmation of his Doctrine attributed Divinity to himself; when he observ'd
that

that Men were credulous enough to believe him.

But these could signifie no other then so many contriv'd Impostorages, and were by degrees, accordingly discover'd, as may be observ'd from Stories, with which the *Theist* does, in no kind, intermix Christianity; notwithstanding it has not that dateless Evidence, as to that Denomination, with his own; It being undeniable that the Belief of one God was a Primitive Motive that had its Original with the Being of the World, and therefore precedent to all subsequent Worshipps.

But since the Profession of Christianity was deliver'd by the

Preaching and Writings of Holy Persons, who by the simplicity of their Lives and Conversation could have no such Indirect Ends and Interests that might derogate from the assurance, conceiv'd by them, of whatsoever they Attested: The *Theist* does, no ways, detract from the Goodness of their Doctrine; and the rather because it has an agreeable excellency with the manifest Text of Devine Providence.

For 'tis a Devine Christian Moral, unparallel'd by other Persuasions, that good Deeds are to be done, for the sake of Good, notwithstanding the unworthiness of the Receiver: So by the Conduct of Providence its Munificence is visibly diffus'd

diffus'd to all Stations of Mankind, however desertlessly perceiv'd and injoy'd by them.

The Consideration of which, together with the pious Examples, Resignations in Spirit, and contempt of worldly advantages, Eminent in, not a few, Christian Professors, raiseth no small desire, in the *Theist*, that he might Associate with them in saying Almighty and most merciful Father: And consequently that in his Judgment, next to the Belief of one God, Christian Profession ought to be Embrac'd before any other in the World.

And thus you have a Summary of the most pertinent Science, and Tenents applica-

ble to the Doctrine of *Theism*,
not hitherto divulg'd, as al-
so its Tendency to the Improve-
ment of Holy Religion and
Practice.

FINIS.

Postscript.

POSTSCRIPT.

THE main Intention of this Treatise has, like the Figure of *Jalons*, two Faces: By the one, of which, the Reader may take a backward prospect of such prophane Superstitions and Worshipps as were frequent in the Traditions and Writings of the Antients; some of which are particularly mention'd in this Book: Together with others, better known, then readily number'd; yet so display'd that their Errors and Absurdities are totally render'd Inconsistent with the superlative Conviction which the Providence of the Almighty has visibly convey'd to Humane Understanding.

But such has been the gross Neglect, or Supidity in Men, that they have perversely applyed the Devotion of their Souls, rather to the artful Insinuations of Counterfeit Tenents, then to the sincere

cere and palpable acknowledgment that there is Deity from what every common Eye may discern in the vast Theatre of his Works that contains Innumerable Scenes of manifest Wonders that could have no other Author than one Omnipotent.

The other signal Part, If not the most useful, was so to introduce Atheisme on the publick Stage, that it might have a reproachful and full defeat from the Demonstration of a God, by the Doctrine of the *Theist*; no less conspicuously discernable then that Mankind, with whatsoever is besides in the Compass of the Universe, are, by Divine appointment, under a miraculous Conduct.

Notwithstanding however powerful those Motives, the *Atheist* to cover his supine disregard of all such conspicuous and sublime Evidences that ought to be undeniably Attributed to the Ordination, Management, and Power of a deified Author, seems to acquiesce in what he terms Nature; and to which obscure Denomination he endeavours to annex the total sum of his Infidelity, by urging that whatsoever has Being above, or below, have an ordinary and natural Subsistency

Subsistency from the Method of Causes and Effects.

Tho he cannot deny that, by so affirming, he is enforc'd to grant that this Empress of the Universe, which he calls Nature, is not Intellegible by any rational Definition of the Word, or any Proprieties he Attributes to her; because it is not possible for him to give any original Account either of the Natural Being of Man, Animal, or Vegetable. Or when the Sun and Stars began first to shine, for Universal Benefit; no more then he is certainly able to tell what a Clock 'twas before he was born.

Too many there are that, if but Entertain'd with Tales of Magick, Witchcraft, or the devices and feats of a Jugler, tho a despicable Imposter, will not only incline to believe them, but heartily wish they might behold such Imaginary Facts perform'd, which but related they deem supernatural Wonders.

But were the same Persons Interrogated, whether, by any of their Senses, they as easily were charm'd by the miraculous Constitution of the Universe and all its Circumscrib'd, 'tis to be doubted that

that not a few of them would with the common *Atheist* reply, that although divers Existencies and Operations, in the World they behold, appear stupendiously wonderful, yet, as they consider them as things of Course, they could not Judge them so extraordinary as the Miracles they had heard of, but for ought they could prove, were never perform'd; which Imbecillities, in humane Comprehension, proceed from no other Fond then want of Judicious Consideration, or not being pertinently Instructed by Superiors.

Should it be demanded, by the Reader, why Texts of Holy Scripture, or Arguments from Venerable Writers have not been more frequently Cited then are to be found in the precedent Book; the Answer, that can most properly be given, is, that the Authors design was barely to Convict the *Atheist*, by proofs Inserted, whereby the open Evidence of *Theisme*, in the Belief of one God, without other Divine Testimonial, or Article of Faith, might be ascertain'd to the clearest Eye of the Intellect: Not but all necessary Texts, of Holy Writ, are thereby effectually ImPLY'd, as is

no

no less perspicuously discernable from the demonstrative Parts of this Treatise, then if pronounc'd with the Psalmist, *That the Heavens declare the glory of God, and the Firmament sheweth his handy Work.*

Nor can the *Atheist*, if not obdurately such, be by any other process so readily Convicted: As he that may probably extend his Faith to the Belief of an Infinite Power and Being, from Actual and Visible Miracles that could be produc'd no otherwise then by an Omnipotent Author, Will not so easily devote his Assent to the most celebrated Authority of any Writing, however Divine it ought to be understood.

'Tis reported of the Philosopher *Aristotle*, tho' far different in Opinion from the obstinacy of the Antient, or Modern *Atheist*, that he having perus'd the Books of *Moses*, his Judgment of them was that they had in them the voice of God, tho' otherwise nothing was prov'd by them: But had that great Man of Science thoroughly consider'd what might have been affirm'd suitable to what is sufficiently Demonstrated in this Work;
he

he would have at least declar'd for the Doctrine of *Theisme*.

But such is the inveterate Impudence and *Odium* that too many, in our days, have against Holy Belief, of whatsoever Denomination, that it is their Luxury to cabal for *Atheisme* and *Prophaneness*, as they mingle those Impieties with their Wine and Mirth; by which they would ascribe to themselves the Title of Wits, however wickedly Principled; or so foolishly Impious that they resist the Dictates of Sense: As if they had Resolvedly confin'd their Souls to such a narrowness of Conception that the broadest Miracles of Divine Providence were not to operate on their understandings.

But 'tis hop'd, if they shall please, with any reasonable discretion, to Inspect the Substance of this Book, that there Infidelity, together with their Debaucheries of Life, will be so far Reform'd as that they will approve themselves better Subjects, in their Duties to Heaven and Earth, then hitherto they have been.

he
nce
ys,
fo-
ix-
ne-
ith
ey
of
or
the
Re-
a
the
nce
ler-
ase,
In-
hat
De-
m'd
pet-
lea-
ave
wil
hu